

N^o 14

The Impartial Justice of Divine Administrations:

A

S E R M O N

PREACH'D at the

A S S I Z E S;

HELD AT

CHELMSFORD in ESSEX,

MARCH the 10th, 1735-6.

Before the HONOURABLE


Mr. JUSTICE DENTON,

A N D

Mr. JUSTICE PROBYN.

By SAMUEL MOODY, M. A.

Rector of Dudinghurst in Essex.

L O N D O N: 

Printed for JAMES BUCKLAND at the Buck in Pater-Noster-Row; and
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The Imperial ... of ...

S E R M O N

A S S I Z E S



CHELMSEA in Essex

MARCH the 10th 1786

Mr Justice DENTON

Mr Justice ROBYN

By ...

...

L O N D O N

...

...

Price Sixpence

T O
WILLIAM DAWTRET, Esq;
H I G H S H E R I F F
O F T H E
County of *ESSEX*,

And to the
GENTLEMEN of the GRAND JURY;

V I Z.

Sir <i>Henry Maynard</i> , Bart.	<i>Thomas Brograve</i> , Esq;
Sir <i>John Eyles</i> , Bart.	<i>Champion Branfill</i> , Esq;
<i>Matthew Wymonsell</i> , Esq;	<i>Thomas Ambrose</i> , Esq;
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<i>John Gould</i> , Esq;	<i>Henry Hall</i> , Esq;
<i>Mark Wynn</i> , Esq;	<i>Edward Holloway</i> , Esq;

This DISCOURSE, Printed at your Request, is
humbly Dedicated by,

GENTLEMEN,

Your Most Obedient Servant,

SAMUEL MOODY.

T O
WILLIAM DAWTRAY, Esq;
HIGH SHERIFF
OF THE
County of ESSEX.

And to the
GENTLEMEN of the Grand Jury;



<p>John W. Brough, Esq;</p> <p>Champion Brough, Esq;</p> <p>Thomas Brough, Esq;</p> <p>Thomas Martin, Esq;</p> <p>John W. Brough, Esq;</p> <p>George Montgomery, Esq;</p> <p>Robert Hicks, Esq;</p> <p>John Martin, Esq;</p> <p>William Townsend, Esq;</p> <p>Henry Hall, Esq;</p> <p>Edward Holman, Esq;</p>	<p>Sir Henry Mordaunt,</p> <p>Sir John Eyles, Bart.</p> <p>Matthew Worsfold, Esq;</p> <p>William Briggs, Esq;</p> <p>Crisp Gascoigne, Esq;</p> <p>Thomas Pratt, Esq;</p> <p>Herbert Triff, Esq;</p> <p>Henry Semers, Esq;</p> <p>Jafer Kinsman, Esq;</p> <p>John Gould, Esq;</p> <p>Mark Wynn, Esq;</p>
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GEN. xviii. 25.

That be far from thee, to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked; and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

YES, most certainly; for justice is the essential rectitude of the Divine will and nature, the settled standard of his respective proceedings; as with the apostate angels; so with the children of men. 'Tis the *Magna Charta*, virtually containing all laws relating either to temporal life, or eternal salvation. Each providential dispensation is conducted with the utmost impartiality, and warranted by the strictest rules of equity; as abundantly appears in this passage of sacred history, in this pathetical conference between Almighty God, and his faithful servant *Abraham*, concerning the destruction of *Sodom*, and the neighbouring cities.

However, 'tis not necessary, especially in such an audience, to consider these words, as bearing a reference to the preceding and subsequent verses; but, as containing an entire proposition, an undoubted maxim both in natural and revealed Religion; that *the Judge of all the earth* acts righteously, executes a true judgment, subject to no error or collusion, and impossible to be reversed. For the question here proposed will not admit of any demur; 'tis no moot-case; but answers itself in the strongest terms, in the most undeniable negation. 'Tis so far from God, so abhorrent to the purity of his nature, so diametrically opposite to his will, which is the sole boundary of his power, *to do after this manner, according to this word, or thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be equally condemned for guiltiness as the wicked are*; that 'tis a direct *prophanation*, as the original word ^a imports; 'tis utterly forbidden, 'tis impossible to be acted by God's absolute holiness

B

and

^a 777. Profanavit, violavit, irritum fecit.

and unspotted goodness. His will is expressly declared to the contrary; and we, without the most daring presumption, cannot offer to extend his omnipotency beyond that. Which regulation being duly observed, we may confidently aver, nothing *is too hard for the Lord*^a. *The Judge of all the earth* can execute every purpose, and whatever is thus performed, cannot be otherwise than just and right. For tho' God deservedly claims the prerogative of enacting laws for all his creatures, and demands an absolute and unlimited obedience, yet is he a perfect law to himself; an agreeable harmony of justice and mercy. Hence he will for ever maintain the cause of the righteous, who conform their thoughts, words, and actions to his known revealed will; and perpetually destroy the wicked and impenitent, who wilfully transgress this unerring rule; for he sitteth *in the throne of equity judging right*^b.

In the further prosecution of this subject, I purpose, by Divine assistance, to consider these particulars.

Ist. That Almighty God is the Fountain of justice, the supreme Judge of all the earth; that his administration here, and judgment hereafter, are altogether righteous.

IIdly. That some branches of this power and authority are delegated and consigned over by the Sovereign Lord to his deputed officers.

Lastly. That all in their several stations ought to copy after this inimitable original; and what benefits and advantages each nation, or particular person may reasonably expect by such conformity.

Ist. then; I shall consider and prove that Almighty God is the Fountain of justice, the supreme Judge of all the earth; that his administration here, and judgment hereafter, are altogether righteous.

The veracity of whose eternal existence needs no proof, for none can be made without it. Every thing bespeaks and presupposes some first, supreme, and independent Cause, such a governing and controlling Principle, as derived its being from no superior; yet such, as distributed either life or subsistence to all things. Hence the general verdict of mankind, the unanimous agreement of all nations and people rise up in judgment, and testify the folly and unreasonableness of vain and conceited infidelity.

No

^a Ver. 14.

^b Psalm ix. 4.

No evil or impiety can proceed from him, who is the Author of all godliness. No error or mistake can be found in him, who is so perfectly constant, so just and true; as subject to no change or instability; not capable of deceiving others, or liable to be deceived himself; but perpetually determined to the advancement of truth, by the infallible direction of his own nature.

This assertion being granted, whatever he commands or forbids must be highly agreeable to justice. He, who is infinitely wise and omniscient, will admit of no feigned devotion, no hypocritical piety. An outward formality will by no means avail to salvation. Such empty oblations will not avert the displeasure of a provoked Judge. No lasting peace or comfort can possibly be procured, but by integrity and upright dealings. The favour of that Sovereign Lord, who created us out of nothing, who redeemed us from sin and misery, and who is always ready to sanctify us with the riches of his grace, (being desirous that *all should come unto the knowledge of the truth, and be saved^a*) can never be obtained, but by an holy and exemplary obedience to those righteous laws, which he has graciously enacted. *Let him therefore be our fear; let him be our dread^b*. Let his infallible word be our principal guide. Let reason vail to revelation, and sense to faith; all prejudicate notions to the undoubted oracle of truth, and the imperfect laws of man to the most perfect commands of God; from whom, as from an unexhausted fountain, all the common duties of humanity are derived. Each bright beam of justice is darted out from this resplendent Sun of righteousness: in him negative and positive justice are manifestly discerned, and shine forth with uncontested evidence. He will not involve the righteous in the same condemnation with the wicked; but allot and distribute rewards to the good, to the diligent observers of the law; and punishments to the wicked, to the wilful transgressors and violators of his righteous statutes. If any seeming difficulties or inequalities occur in the disposition of worldly affairs, yet all will in due time be rectified, and the beauty of God's administration finally appear, beyond the pretence of any exceptions, just, proportionate, and harmonious.

The Divine Power has sufficiently manifested its virtue and energy, as in the wonderful works of creation; so by other visible and demonstrable signs, in the several acts of his government and providence; which even some of the wisest heathens freely acknowledged: and these are best displayed.

^a *Tim. ii. 4.*

^b *Isa. viii. 13.*

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^a 1 Tim. ii. 4.

^b Isa. viii. 13.

played by that last and most perfect revelation of the Divine will in the person of the Messiah, who is become an universal Saviour to redeem all penitent offenders by the most prevailing ransom. For without this agreeable prospect, *the remission of sins*, how very terrible and astonishing is the apprehension of an angry and provoked Judge! Who can stand and confidently appear in his sight without a powerful Advocate? Will not the overflowing flood of his encreasing displeasure utterly consume us, if no rock of salvation and security be found? Will not our sickness prove dangerous and mortal without a skilful physician? Sure, if our cause be doubtful, or possibly bad, we want the best counsellor to manage it. Original corruption has polluted our natures much; but wilful depravity and actual disobedience much more. If then, the terms proposed by Divine revelation do not assist and relieve our otherwise desperate case; how is it possible, that weak, corrupt, and unrepaired reason should! This is to confound the common notions of good and evil, to *put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter*, as the Evangelical prophet *Isaiah* speaks, v. 20. to the abettors of which distastful tenets he pronounces a dreadful woe. These prefer sensual, even more than brutal pleasures, to the most refined and spiritual delights; they set up each wild and ridiculous opinion to confront the best attested knowledge, the sure word of prophecy; thus the transition is easy and natural from bad practices to worst principles. But *shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Shall he not execute severe judgment against such wretches, who dare by a premeditated act to prophane his holy day? Some sins are unadvisedly and suddenly committed; the violence of passion, or the surprisal of a tempting object transports too many beyond measure; but here is no pretence, no room for a plea. 'Tis like raising a rebellion against the supreme Majesty of heaven; a deliberate offence, studied and contrived; perpetrated against knowledge, against self-conviction, and repeated warnings and threatnings. 'Tis the too fruitful seminary, the sad forerunner of most other sins and evils, and indeed by a natural consequence; for they, who fear not to provoke God, but vilify his honour, and forget his peculiar *memento*, will hardly dread the displeasure of man. If Divinity be thus insulted by such prophanation, by lightly, wantonly, or notoriously using God's sacred name, by ridiculing his word and sacraments, or by any blasphemous speeches; how can mortality hope to escape? Surely such, instead of *working out their salvation with fear and trembling,*

trembling, as *St. Paul* directs in *Phil. ii. 12.* do hasten on by foolish and shameful excess their own misery.

But further; Some plead the powerful dominion to sin, to excuse their wilful perverseness. What? *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* Has our Almighty Creator subjected us in very deed to a necessity of sinning grievously, and yet will he punish us for such involuntary acts? No certainly. These are blind conjectures, or rather impious tenets; unjust reflections on the most righteous Lawgiver, who has undoubtedly imprinted in our natures the notions of good and evil, of virtue and vice; the choice whereof is free and voluntary. Life and death are propounded to our acceptance. No unavoidable fate determines us; for otherwise; we could neither be saved, nor damned with justice. Consider withal; how ungratefully we undervalue the inestimable benefits of our redemption, when for the ready purchase of, and enfeoffment in them, we will not forego and relinquish that pretended right and title, which evil habits and customs claim, tho' by a long prescription, over us? Is it just to prefer the transitory pleasures of sin; and indeed, too often the severe pains and penalties annexed, before the exquisite delights of religion? whose virtue and efficacy continue on to a blessed immortality.

Now then; Let us not dare so highly to affront our own reason, the dictates of our holy Religion, and the common sense of mankind, as to defy the sacred Majesty of heaven, and trample under foot his gracious laws. They manage very indiscreetly their spiritual concerns, and ground their hopes on a sandy foundation, who conceive, that God will be pacified for their manifold trespasses, by a common act of humiliation; that they may still sin on without further control, and often transgress, if they as often repent. But the strict charge of the omniscient Judge is not to be thus eluded. This perverse method will rather inflame than extinguish the Divine vengeance; it will sharpen the edge of his fiery indignation, to consume all hypocritical and obstinate offenders with undoubted punishments, with eternal torments. A truth this, not only warranted by sufficient proofs from Scripture, being expressed in the fullest terms imaginable, as evidently appears from *St. Mark ix. 43*, and the following verses, where the replication enforces the plea more strongly, and a three-fold cord is not easily broken. To confirm which in *St. Luke's* gospel, *xvi. 26.* an undeniable reason is assigned by the utter impossibility of any return, even after the duration of many ages, from misery to happiness;

piness; *Between us and you*, says *Abraham* to *Dives*, *there is a great gulph fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.* But 'tis also capable of strong evidence and conviction, from the principles of reason and common equity; which preponderate too much, if not alone, with some men; but how very unjustly, I leave their beloved idol *reason*, and their own unprejudiced conscience to judge; when I demand, What? Did the Sovereign Lord in creating mankind exclude himself from all tribute of glory from his creatures, and impart to them the prerogative of reason, that they might limit his omnipotency, and restrain his justice? Sure; if eternal rewards are granted to the faithful and obedient without any just claim of merit, no injury is done, if the unbelieving and impenitent are punished with everlasting torments. They, who sin, are finite; 'tis true, as having a beginning: yet, after a temporal dissolution, they continue for ever and ever in an unchangeable state of happiness or misery; for thus the righteous *Judge of all the earth* has determined it in *Matt. xxv. 46.* against whose absolutely infinite nature they sinned, and in all probability would have sinned on, if permitted to live, thro' many thousand ages.

I proceed now in the second place to urge,

That some branches of this power and authority are delegated and consigned over by the Sovereign Lord to his deputed officers.

To the King, as supreme in this land, and vicegerent of the most High; no vassal to the usurping power of *Rome*; tho' a glorious crown was publicly alledged, even in that city, above fifty years ago, to be reserved for his illustrious Family^a; no dutiful son to the pretended vicar of Christ, and consequently no *image of the beast*: but lawfully claiming that supremacy, which the good kings of *Judah* exerted; particularly *Jehoshaphat*, whose charge to the Judges, and other magistrates, is strict and solemn in *2 Chron. xix. 6.* and following verses; and this Royal authority, appointed for the benefit of the people, is the liveliest impression of the image of God; carrying with its pomp and splendor no ordinary burden; insomuch that a quiet submission, a chearful obedience is a much easier task

^a See *Interlocutiones inter Pasquinum & Marphorium*, &c. printed in *Latin and French*, 1632.

task than rule and government. Yet indeed, this weighty concern is in a great measure alleviated by God's particular regard to their persons, and maintaining his own cause by a favourable charter of protection. Kings are in an especial manner his ministers and *servants*; an appellation this, which K. James I. valued above all his other scripture-titles. Under these, several Governors and officers are appointed and commissioned truly and indifferently to minister justice, *for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well*^a; for the maintenance of God's true religion and virtue. The power of life and death is upon certain conditions assigned over to them. The case is evident and express with the reference to wilful murder in *Gen. ix. 6. He that sheddeth man's blood, by man* (i. e. by the ruling Magistrate in each nation) *shall his blood be* (most justly) *shed: for in the image of God made he him*; and consequently by this high provocation the Divine Majesty is peculiarly affronted. All others, who unjustly assume the sword, shall perish by the sword of the supreme Power, who *beareth not* that vindictive weapon, *that rod of iron in vain*; which, like the flaming blade of the cherubims, turneth every way to guard the prerogative of the king, and the liberties of the people. Hence, as St. Paul, the great champion of the Christian faith, urges the Roman Emperor's commission in *Rom. xiii. 4. He is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil*. For the law must be satisfied, and iniquity purged away by the death of the offender; that the land may be freed from the heavy guilt of innocent blood. The corrupt members of a community must be cut off by the sword of justice, lest by delay and impunity the malignant disease spread further, and the whole be infected. The *Benjamites*^b are a notorious instance of such partiality and perverseness; who, by refusing to execute judgment on some vile malefactors, were reduced by bloody wars to an inconsiderable number, were almost depopulated. Those of *Abel*^c by the persuasion of a prudent woman managed their case wisely and securely; for, by throwing the rebel's head over the wall to the resolute general, the city was preserved, and peace restored to *Israel*.

This convention will, no doubt, be sensible of the unspeakable benefits conveyed by a just administration. When *piety and justice*^d, the two best supports and pillars of any community are chiefly regarded. When

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^a 2 St. Pet. ii. 14.

^b Judg. chap. xix, &c.

^c 2 Sam. xx.

^d The motto of

Charles the IXth of France was, *Pietate & Justitia*.

no rigid severity is practised ; but a due moderation punctually observed. When equity rules without extremity, and each man's peculiar right is determined, without wrong and injustice to any. When each cause shall be heard with patience ; wise and discreet answers be given ; the judgment upright and unbiassed ; and the sentence of execution tempered with the utmost mercy and compassion. When publick authority shall scorn to resent a private injury ; neither shall the due course of justice be shamefully perverted by illegal practices. Thus what is related of the *Areopagite* judges among the *Athenians* may be verified of ours^a ; *Their sentence was so upright, that none either appellant or prisoner, could ever say, that he was unjustly condemned.* Now then ; Let no person presume to libel and calumniate the proceedings of a just Government and Ministry, or draw odious comparisons and false characters. With reference to this base defamation even of private persons, the *Roman law*^b was very strict, ordering *that a certain letter in token of infamy should be burnt in his forehead, who, in his accusation against another, had forged faults that were never committed.* Hence, with regard to Judges, and other ruling Officers, the argument is more forcible and valid. They resemble the strong supporting pillars of an house ; which, if shaken, or undermined, endanger the whole building. To secure against which desolation, let us be willingly subject to those Powers which *are ordained of God* ; they attend continually, as his servants for the publick good. *Render therefore, as St. Paul, in conformity to our Blessed Saviour's injunction*^c, directs in *Rom. xiii. 7. to all their dues : tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. I counsel thee, says that wise Ruler Solomon in Eccles. viii. 2. to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.*

I proceed now in the last place to urge,

That all in their several stations ought to copy after this inimitable original ; and what benefits and advantages each nation, or particular person may reasonably expect by such conformity.

Almighty God, that most upright Judge, bears long with finners, before he repays vengeance ; which plainly demonstrates his very merciful dispo-

^a Vide *Archæol. Attic.* l. 3. c. 3.

^b *Lex Memnonia* ; al. *Rhemnia*.

^c *St. Mat.* xxii. 21.

disposition, his unwillingness that any should perish. Hence they, who bear some slight injuries without taking the utmost advantage of the law, shall find an inward content, and meet deservedly with outward applause. Yet withal, greater crimes demand the severest punishments. Rebellion and murder are sins of a very enormous nature, as defacing God's authority and image imprest on man. The former, in whatever shape it appears, whether it be open and notorious; or secret and undermining, has not in these *Halcyon* days the least colour or pretence. Sure I am, our gracious Sovereign dares appeal to the impartial tribunal, to the righteous *Judge of all the earth* for the vindication of his cause, and decision of his right; before whose awful throne for the prudent administration of justice and clemency he may rest secure, not only of an honourable discharge, but of a bountiful euge. Whilst his false accusers and malicious adversaries do justly merit either shame and contempt, as the lowest wages; or temporal death, as the highest here; yet, if they repent not sincerely of their ungrateful and rebellious practices, may deservedly expect from the omnipotent Judge eternal misery and destruction. Widely different from these was the mild and peaceable behaviour of the *Sicilians*, whose cause the prince of orators pleaded against encroaching *Verres*, who had harassed them exceedingly; yet, even under these oppressions, they revolted not: but, in consideration of the invaluable benefits, which they at other times received from the *Roman* government, dispensed with a temporary inconvenience. Whereas our malecontents do utter causeless curses, and speak not only irreverent, but base, and threatening language, and consequently are liable to be impleaded; I will not say, they stand convicted by their own conscience, tho' the regular course of affairs for so many years stilly, but in vain opposed, testifies to their face, and renders them happy even against their wills. Thus, as an excellent writer^a observes, 'We have reason, and justice, and law, and loyalty on our side; all those the enemies of our church and state must want.' Now then; what can possibly provoke any even to a dislike of our present constitution. No lawful pretence of tyrannical usurpation, of male-administration. Is not the authority of Kingly government duly preserved and maintained without any encroachment on the liberties of the people? Is not the good and safety of the established Church firmly secured in all its just rights, and the utmost regard

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^a Bp. Sprat.

gard had to consciences truly scrupulous? Is not justice faithfully administered and executed in each well-constituted court? The wise and prudent Councils; the resolute and indefatigable Ministry guard all avenues; neither do they give any advantage to the crafty and deceitful of working upon them; for, being constant to themselves, they act not rashly and unadvisedly; their severe virtue, and unfeigned regard to the publick welfare, secure them from the attempts of open enemies, and perfidious friends.

Certainly then; We shall be utterly inexcusable; if, when such a large and continued prospect of peace and happiness is afforded, we refuse to comply with those easy terms and conditions on which it is founded; the exertion of *justice*, the love of *mercy*, and *humility* towards God. We, who stedfastly believe, that an All-powerful Being not only created, but continually sustains and supports every thing in its proper and determinate existence, should in all dutiful submission readily and without scruple obey his Divine will and pleasure, however conveyed and ascertained to our knowledge. We should duly observe each injunction of our Lawgiver, and pay such an awful regard and deference to the infinite and exalted Majesty of the Supreme Judge of all the earth, as most thankfully to comply with that avowed obedience on which every gracious promise is founded, and to avoid, with the utmost abhorrence and detestation, those several transgressions to the wilful perpetration of which the strongest sanction is added, and the heaviest threatnings denounced. Now then; Be just to yourselves; to your own interest and reputation; to your bodies, to your souls. If even a base obscenity in words ought carefully to be avoided, as trespassing much, not only on Christian purity, but on the stated rules of good manners; certainly all unclean and degenerate actions should be eschewed with the greatest aversion. If even reason dictates to us the unnaturalness of some sins; with what regard to Divine revelation can those be committed, whose very names are disagreeable to chaste ears.

Neither must we follow a multitude to do evil, as that prudent Judge warns the *Israelites* in *Exod.* xxiii. 2. 'Tis a poor excuse to plead the generality; a thin covering for a notorious deformity. 'Tis rather a most provoking affront, a strong argument for a more speedy condemnation. What? Would the united force and combination of impious sinners presumptuously outbrave the Majesty of heaven, or the authority

authority of his deputed Ministers upon earth? Sure the more spreading the infection is, the greater is the crime, and more affronting the provocation; and finally, the redress and vengeance more severe; as the dreadful overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* does abundantly testify. Not that I design to draw any parallel. Comparisons are odious, and very often false. Only let us in due time be persuaded to act justly; to fear God, to honour the king^a, and consult each other's welfare. Let us regard not so much the form, as the power of godliness; neither contend so earnestly for the shadow, as to lose the substance; and by causeless divisions weaken and endanger the foundation. We are all espoused to the interest and prosperity of this happy Island; let us equally concur in our grateful acknowledgments for God's undeserved mercy; for his favourable respite of justice. We are blest with abundance, even with superfluities; yet we complain; complain of the best of Governments, of the most peaceable times. What? Are we displeased for not being involved in a bloody and expensive war? Which, as *Xenophon*, the Greek historian observes^b, *is not undertaken by wise and prudent Governors without absolute necessity, unless upon very pressing and emergent occasions*. A maxim this frequently inculcated by two great Roman generals^c. What? Is a settled peace such a restless thing? Are troubles so very desirable, that we will not forego our perverse humours to be gratified with ease and plenty? Is it no mercy, but rather a cruelty; and a sufficient cause of murmuring against Divine providence, and taxing our Supreme Governor, and his subordinate agents with blunders and mismanagements; that we have felt no terrors of war, (tho' all *Europe* almost has been in a combustion, which now is happily extinguished by God's blessing on our mediation,) that we have heard no alarms, but only by report? Is it not true, even to a demonstration, that *the mountains* do oftner than yearly bring peace; and *the little hills* do daily produce righteousness unto the people^d?

Now then; Let the cause of piety, loyalty, justice and temperance, which this season of *Lent* especially demands, be maintained against all opposition. Ye serve a bountiful God; only make noty our present tranquillity an unhappy occasion of future troubles. Be not deceived by the crafty insinuations of men of corrupt minds and rebellious

^a 1 St. Pet. ii. 17. ^b *Hist. Græcæ* 6^{to}.
See Grot. de Jure belli & pacis, l. 2. cap. 24. Sect. 9.

^c *Scipio Africanus*, and *L. Æmilius Paulus*.
^d *Psal.* lxxii. 3.

bellious principles. Judge according to the perception of your senses. Compare your case with other nations in every capacity, in your temporal and spiritual concerns; and then be lavish in your reproaches: or rather, reprove and condemn your own partial surmises, and most unjust reflections.

Thus; As true religion is maintained, and justice orderly administered; let prophaneness and infidelity be utterly banished. What a strange medley is made? What absurd confusion follows? when debauchery and excess; immorality and licentiousness spread and dilate their malignant qualities in opposition to the best and most wholesome laws; when reason, which should support, undermines religion; when revelation, which is God's important and standing message to mankind, is eagerly opposed, and the weak voice of fallible man highly applauded. Safely may the Lord, *the Judge of all the earth*, have a controversy with the inhabitants of this land; whilst, as the prophet *Hosea* speaks with reference to the children of *Israel*, iv. 2. *By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.* A speedy redress for which, and other mischiefs and disorders (as bringing dreadful calamities on a nation, when left unpunished) is justly expected from the worthy Grand-Jury, and all Petty Juries. Great stress is incumbent on you, as sworn to maintain the honour of God and the King, and the rights of the people; bear it no less equally than patiently. Justice and mercy meet together, and determine your verdict. You are placed like the river *Nile*; be steady, if possible, to an equilibrium; if you are either deficient or superabundant, a famine ensues; if not of bread, the staff of life; yet of justice, the lively support of a flourishing kingdom. Let the witnesses speak the truth, being hearty and sincere, without partial affection, and swayed only with the pure merits of the cause. Let *St. Paul's* assertion be yours in 2 *Cor.* xiii. 8. *We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.* ^a *Whilst you deal uprightly none can make you afraid; yet by the old Roman law* ^b *If any bore false witness, in order to oppress the innocent, that he might be condemned by publick judgment, his own life was called in question.* Let your minds therefore be devoid of sinful passion and resentment; be not allured by rewards, or terrified

^a *Recte faciendo neminem timeas.* The device of *Henry Julius, D. of Brunswick.* ^b *Cic. pro Cluentio.*

by threats; be upright in your dealings, true to your trust, and punctual to your word; then may you, and all others concerned in managing of causes, safely triumph in the Divine protection, and expect not only temporal ^a *Security*, which the coin of *Lucilla Augusta* bore; but everlasting peace and happiness. Especially, if we are careful to preserve our souls from the guilt of perjury. Now many are called upon to swear; and undoubtedly, an oath, which determines much strife and contention, may in some important cases be safely required; tho' an honest man would no sooner expose his word than such a solemn pledge. However, when we have obliged our souls with such strong bonds, let us be exceedingly careful to fulfil the conditions, whether in deed, or in law, to observe them religiously. We should not consider so much our own loss and disadvantage by the execution; as God's fiery wrath and consuming indignation by the non-performance.

In fine; Let each dare to be just and true. Whilst well-grounded principles influence your actions, you will utterly abhor all perjury and perfidiousness; nothing will be done thro' strife and envy; thro' favour, or hatred; thro' partial and corrupt affection; no false report will be raised, nor trifling complaints brought, nor any espousing of apparently evil causes; you will never wrong your judgment and conscience to gratify your unruly passions, your unmeasurable appetites. Cultivate a good understanding with yourself, and display the virtue of innate goodness by outward actions. Let your words be fairly copied from your pure conceptions, and the result of both will be an exemplary conversation. Make your peace by being acquainted with God, the most just Judge, before the sudden arrest of death comes; before the general process be entered against you; such as is liable to no error, and consequently not any amendment can be granted in this case; neither will any warranty be made. To prepare us for which, I doubt not, but we shall shortly find that representation, which the Poets draw of *Justice*, as carrying a sword in one hand, and a balance in the other, portrayed in lively characters; that all sin and wickedness may be punished and repressed by the former, and all litigious causes, and controverted points be deliberately weighed, and duly adjudged by the latter; when a clear distinction

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shall

^a *Securitas.*

shall be made between innocency and guiltiness; between right and wrong, to the regular establishment of virtue, peace, and security; that the *petty Sessions* here may prefigure the *grand Assizes* hereafter, when Christ, *the Son of Man*, who is also *the Son of God*, that impartial Judge, shall at the last awful day summon and cite, by the angels his officers with a great sound of the trumpet, all nations and people before his throne, to answer to the several indictments brought against them; and then, according to their respective deeds done in the body, pronounce the irreverfible sentence of everlasting happiness, or everlasting misery; to the former of which God in his infinite mercy admit us all, for the alone merits and mediation of his only-begotten Son, but our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom with the Father, &c.

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